IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 25-39, and amend the claims as follows:

1. (Original) A downhole filter comprising a tubular member having a wall defining at least one opening, at least a portion of the opening having an outer width less than an inner width.

2. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein said outer width defines the minimum width of the opening.

3. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein said portion of said opening defining said outer width is located on an outer circumference of the tubular member.

4. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein the opening has a keystone form.

5. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein the opening is created by laser-cutting.

6. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein the opening is created by abrasive water jet cutting.

7. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein the opening is in the form of a slot and extends longitudinally of the tubular member.

8. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein the opening is in the form of a slot and extends circumferentially of the tubular member.

9. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein the opening is in the form of a slot and extends helically of the tubular member.

10. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein the opening is in the form of a serpentine slot.

11. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein the tubular member is diametrically expandable.

12. (Original) The filter of claim 11, wherein the wall of the tubular member incorporates extendible portions.

13. (Original) The filter of claim 11, wherein the wall of the tubular member has at least one substantially circular opening therein which opening is adapted to assume a circumferentially-extending slot-form of smaller width than the original substantially circular opening, following diametric expansion of the tubular member.

14. (Original) The filter of claim 1, wherein the wall of the tubular member defines a plurality of openings.

15. (Original) A wellbore filter comprising a tubular member having at least one opening therethrough, the opening having a serpentine configuration.

16. (Original) A method of filtering wellbore fluids, the method comprising:

placing a downhole filter within a wellbore, the downhole filter comprising a tubular member defining at least one opening, at least a portion of the opening having an outer width less than an inner width; and

passing wellbore fluids into an interior passage of the tubular member through the opening.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising sizing the outer width of said opening to filter wellbore particulate matter of a predetermined diameter.

18. (Original) A downhole filter arrangement comprising a tubular member having a wall defining at least one laser-cut perforation.

19. (Original) The filter arrangement of claim 18, wherein the tubular member is formed of metal.

20. (Original) The filter arrangement of claim 18, wherein the wall of the tubular member defines a plurality of laser-cut perforations.

21. (Original) The filter arrangement of claim 18, wherein the perforation is in the form of a slot of constant width along the length of the slot.

22. (Original) The filter arrangement of claim 21, wherein the slot is of serpentine form.

23. (Original) The filter arrangement of claim 18, wherein at least the outer edges of the perforation have been quenched.

24. (Original) The filter arrangement of claim 18, wherein the perforation has an outer width less than an inner width.

25-39. (Cancelled)

Please add the following new claims:

40. (New) A downhole filter comprising:

a tubular having one or more opening in the wall of the tubular, the opening increasing in width from a outer wall of the tubular to an inner wall of the tubular; and

a deformable filter sheet around the exterior of the tubular, the deformable filter sheet having one or more perforations.

41. (New) The downhole filter of claim 40, wherein the tubular and the filter sheet are expandable.

42. (New) The downhole filter of claim 40, wherein the perforation is laser cut.